

1 Kings 21 – Thursday, January 14th, 2016

1 And it came to pass after these things that Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard which was in Jezreel, next to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. 2 So Ahab spoke to Naboth, saying, "Give me your vineyard, that I may have it for a vegetable garden, because it is near, next to my house; and for it I will give you a vineyard better than it. Or, if it seems good to you, I will give you its worth in money." 3 But Naboth said to Ahab, "The LORD forbid that I should give the inheritance of my fathers to you!"

- Once again, and true to form, what Ahab is doing here is wrong on every level chiefly because this is against God's command.
- Conversely it's for this reason that what Naboth does here is right on every level, this because he's obeying God's command.
- God had commanded the children of Israel to never sell the land that God had given the individual tribes as their inheritance.

Numbers 36:7 (NKJV) — 7 So the inheritance of the children of Israel shall not change hands from tribe to tribe, for every one of the children of Israel shall keep the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers.

Leviticus 25:23 23 'The land shall not be sold permanently, for the land is Mine; for you are strangers and sojourners with Me.

Ezekiel 46:18 Moreover the prince shall not take any of the people's inheritance by evicting them from their property; he shall provide an inheritance for his sons from his own property, so that none of My people may be scattered from his property." ' ' "

Leviticus 25:15 (NKJV) — 15 According to the number of years after the Jubilee you shall buy from your neighbor, and according to the number of years of crops he shall sell to you.

- For Naboth to take this stand against the King no less is remarkable by virtue of the fact that he did it under crushing pressure.
- Sadly, Naboth's righteous stand will cost him his very life, as we'll soon see, and this at the hands of an evil Ahab and Jezebel.
- The reason I point this out is because I'm of the belief that Naboth knew obeying God's command could lead to his own death.

4 So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, "I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers." And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food. 5 But Jezebel his wife came to him, and said to him, "Why is your spirit so sullen that you eat no food?" 6 He said to her, "Because I spoke to Naboth the Jezreelite, and said to him, 'Give me your vineyard for money; or else, if it pleases you, I will give you another vineyard for it.' And he answered, 'I will not give you my vineyard.'" 7 Then Jezebel his wife said to him, "You now exercise authority over Israel! Arise, eat food, and let your heart be cheerful; I will give you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite."

- It's interesting to note that Ahab doesn't represent Naboth honestly by implying Naboth was defiant and disrespecting Ahab.
- Not only is this Ahab an evil and dishonest as a childish man, so too is he a puppet king and husband as evidenced by Jezebel.
- As we'll see next Jezebel, who stops at nothing doing anything to get everything she wants, takes matters into her own hands.

8 And she wrote letters in Ahab's name, sealed them with his seal, and sent the letters to the elders and the nobles who were dwelling in the city with Naboth. 9 She wrote in the letters, saying, Proclaim a fast, and seat Naboth with high honor among the people; 10 and seat two men, scoundrels, before him to bear witness against him, saying, You have blasphemed God and the king. Then take him out, and stone him, that he may die. 11 So the men of his city, the elders and nobles who were inhabitants of his city, did as Jezebel had sent to them, as it was written in the letters which she had sent to them. 12 They proclaimed a fast, and seated Naboth with high honor among the people. 13 And two men, scoundrels, came in and sat before him; and the scoundrels witnessed against him, against Naboth, in the presence of the people, saying, "Naboth has blasphemed God and the king!" Then they took him outside the city and stoned him with stones, so that he died. 14 Then they sent to Jezebel, saying, "Naboth has been stoned and is dead."

- The success of this evil plot on the part of Jezebel is due to the unwillingness of anyone to stand up to her, chiefly her husband.
- One commentator aptly noted that while Ahab was wicked and weak, the elders of Jezreel were wicked weak and subservient.
- Weak and subservient men are no match for a wicked and strong Jezebel, who actually has all Naboth's heirs also murdered.

2 Kings 9:26 'Surely I saw yesterday the blood of Naboth and the blood of his sons,' says the LORD, 'and I will repay you in this plot,' says the LORD. Now therefore, take and throw him on the plot of ground, according to the word of the LORD."

15 And it came to pass, when Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned and was dead, that Jezebel said to Ahab, "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give you for money; for Naboth is not alive, but dead."

16 So it was, when Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, that Ahab got up and went down to take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.

- What Jezebel has Ahab do here only compounds the evil, which they have already accomplished, as this is still not their land.
- She took that which she coveted and wanted to have by murdering all who would stand in the way, so as to gain it in the end.
- Actually this is known as a Jezebel Spirit, which is characterized by destroying all who stand in the way of one getting their way.

- One needs look no further than to the destruction of many churches, pastors, and even marriages, friendships and businesses.
- While much has been written about this Jezebel Spirit as it's come to be known how they do what they do is really quite simple.
- The reason is James gives us their script. When one covets but doesn't get what they desire to have they kill in order to have it.

James 4:1-2 - What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? 2 You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight.

- As I have shared in the past I've been on the receiving end of this in that the man involved sought to assassinate my character.
- He did this by using his charismatic personality to recruit people in my church into his web of deceit by criticizing my leadership.
- This caused fighting and quarreling within the church, just as James describes, and it ultimately led me to question my calling.
- The Lord had ministered to me I was in good company with the likes of Elijah, who was on the receiving end of Jezebel herself.
- Jezebel almost succeeded in getting Elijah to quit the ministry as it were, which is textbook when it comes to what Jezebel's do.
- By textbook I mean that they will eliminate anyone who stands in the way of them getting their way and having what they want.

It's not so much that they do this, it's more the cunning way in which they do this, as one commented, "[They] will come after your specific personality traits, both good and bad... [They] will try and make you think you are the crazy one... Before you know it, this ...can throw you into a depression, along with causing major confusion and indecisiveness. You will feel disoriented and feel like you are caught up in a fog. In other words, [they] will try to suck the life out of you and tear you down every which way [they] can so you can no longer function in your calling for the Lord. The prophet Elijah himself was so distraught and depressed after coming into direct contact with Queen Jezebel ... that he almost wanted to throw in the towel and quit until God strengthened him through an angel and then gave him a direct word. [They are] very good at being very critical and judgmental and before you know it, it will have you believing in all of the lies it has been throwing your way. This is where you really have to know who you are in Christ, and that you never allow ...them to be able to bring you down like they almost did with Elijah. Let this part of Elijah's story be a major lesson to all of us on how far this spirit will try and go – to literally try and get you to quit and walk out on God's calling for your life. I believe a lot of the suicides we see may be as a result of this spirit's evil influence over a person and the mind games it knows how to play with them. If they can do this with a great man of God like Elijah, they then will be able to do it with ...us.

17 Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 18 "Arise, go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who lives in Samaria. There he is, in the vineyard of Naboth, where he has gone down to take possession of it.

- There are two things I would like to point out here in these two verses, the first of which has to do with addressing him as king.
- The reason this is important to point out is because God is clearly holding Ahab, as king, responsible for everything he's done.
- In other words, Ahab bears the full weight of responsibility for that which he has allowed his evil wife Jezebel to do in his name.
- The second thing I'd like to point out is that God acknowledges this vineyard as still belonging to Naboth, and not King Ahab.
- The reason this is important is because, no matter how hard we try to justify our sin in order to fool others, we never fool God.
- We do err greatly in our ill-fated efforts to fool others by virtue of the fact that we can end up fooling ourselves in the process.

1 John 1:8 (NKJV) — 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

19 You shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "Have you murdered and also taken possession?" ' And you shall speak to him, saying, 'Thus says the LORD: "In the place where dogs licked the blood of Naboth, dogs shall lick your blood, even yours." ' ' 20 So Ahab said to Elijah, "Have you found me, O my enemy?" And he answered, "I have found you, because you have sold yourself to do evil in the sight of the LORD:

- I find it interesting that once again, Ahab sees Elijah as his enemy, when the truth of the matter is that Elijah is his best friend.

F.B. Meyer, "Though the king knew it not, Elijah was his best friend; Jezebel his direst foe. To the widow of Zarephath Elijah was an angel of light; whilst to Ahab he was an enemy. What you are determines whether Elijah will be your friend or your enemy."

21 'Behold, I will bring calamity on you. I will take away your posterity, and will cut off from Ahab every male in Israel, both bond and free. 22 I will make your house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, because of the provocation with which you have provoked Me to anger, and made Israel sin.' 23 And concerning Jezebel the LORD also spoke, saying, 'The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.' 24 The dogs shall eat whoever belongs to Ahab and dies in the city, and the birds of the air shall eat whoever dies in the field."

- It's passages like this in the Bible that one can find great encouragement from because in the end, evil is dealt with by the Lord.

G. Campbell Morgan – "Ahab never possessed the vineyard of Naboth. He held it, but that very fact became to him a torment. However fine the vintage, for him the grapes were acrid, poisonous ... That which is gained by fraud is never possessed."

25 But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up. 26 And he behaved very abominably in following idols, according to all that the Amorites had done, whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel. 27 So it was, when Ahab heard those words, that he tore his clothes and put sackcloth on his body, and fasted and lay in sackcloth, and went about mourning. 28 And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, 29 "See how Ahab has humbled himself before Me? Because he has humbled himself before Me, I will not bring the calamity in his days. In the days of his son I will bring the calamity on his house."

- While there was humility on the part of Ahab, this is not true repentance, which will be evidenced by what we see Ahab still do.